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***Training and Education
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***NATIONAL STRATEGIC TRAINING AND EDUCATION PLAN PROCESS AND
ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION***

NOTICE: This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>

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**National Strategic Training and Education Process and Annual Implementation Plan for
Training and Education**

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1. Purpose. To provide information on the National Strategic Training and Education Process (NSTEP), and the use of annual Implementation Plans for Training and Education related to the NSTEP.

2. NSTEP Process. The NSTEP is the mechanism by which National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) National Weather Service (NWS) training and education requirements are identified, prioritized and met.

2.1 Mission, Vision and Goals. The NSTEP ensures the NWS's highest priority training needs are met. This means maintaining an efficient and effective work force and facilitating the transfer of scientific and technological developments into operations.

Within the context of this mission, the vision is to develop and deliver effective training in response to NWS workforce needs.

The following goals specify the framework by which this vision will be realized:

- a. Establish a logical, flexible, and responsive training infrastructure to quickly translate field training and education requirements into easily accessible, usable, and effective training materials. An NSTEP Team (see Infrastructure Section 2.3 below) defines and establishes priorities for training via a well-defined process.
- b. Implement an efficient, open, and consistent process for defining and establishing priorities for NWS training requirements. All requirements are defined by field representatives and NWS Headquarters representatives to the NSTEP Team. Requirements are prioritized

solely by field representatives to the team. The NSTEP is facilitated by the Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (OCWWS).

- c. Create an integrated model for defining required knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform job tasks. These definitions will be easily accessible and understood by users and are used by the trainers as the template for development. This is done through the Professional Development Series (PDS) concept. More information on the PDS process can be found at: <http://www.nwstc.noaa.gov/nwstrn/d.ntp/pds.html>
- d. Develop annual Implementation Plans (IP) for training and support to ensure responsiveness to field requirements and to sustain the high level of science and technical infusion required to maintain the high forecast standards of the NWS. Each year, an IP detailing training requirements is prioritized by National and Regional Headquarters Directors and the Director of the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), and approved by the OCWWS Director. This IP is described further in Section 3 of this document.
- e. Create a process to facilitate rapid response to new or changing training priorities within any fiscal year. Identify requirements which cannot be met due to resource limitations or additions to training priorities, and raise them to senior management. The field representatives to the NSTEP Team communicate regularly to discuss any revisions to requirements which arise during the year.
- f. Establish an effective evaluation process to ensure staff are reaping the intended benefits of training. Involve local supervisors in assessing the impact of training on job performance and providing feedback to the Team. PDS Instructional Components (ICs) are responsible for producing an end-of-training evaluation to assess the impact of the training provided.

2.2 Infrastructure. The NSTEP Team is composed of three groups:

- a. The Field Requirements Group (FRG) consists of one representative from each Region and the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP). This group is responsible for identifying and prioritizing training requirements and deficiencies, and for providing recommendations for the annual IP. Essentially, this group decides upon those training items which should be developed and delivered in a given fiscal year.
- b. The National Headquarters Group (NHG) consists of representatives from OCWWS, the Office of Hydrologic Development (OHD), the Office of Operational Systems (OPS), the Office of Science and Technology (OS&T), the Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO), and the Office of Chief Financial Officer (CFO). This group provides support, direction and coordination for the NWS training requirements process.

- c. The Heads of Training Group (HOTG) is composed of all training providers, including the NWS Training Center (NWSTC) in Kansas City, MO; the Warning Decision Training Branch (WDTB) in Norman, OK; the Cooperative Program for Operational Meteorology, Education, and Training (COMET) Branch in Boulder, CO, and the Virtual Institute for Satellite Integration Training (VISIT).

2.3 Annual NSTEP Process. The annual NSTEP process used to determine the required training in a given fiscal year is as follows (target dates in parenthesis):

- (1) The FRG/NHG determine new and ongoing training requirements and prepare proposals for NSTEP Team review and consideration. OCWWS coordinates with OS&T to ensure Science and Technology Infusion Plan (STIP) goals are addressed. One page training proposals are submitted to OCWWS for each training request. Each group, as necessary, coordinates with the HOTG to determine training options and resources needed to accomplish each training need. (December/January)
- (2) OCWWS distributes proposals and HOTG analyses to FRG for review. (By February 28)
- (3) The FRG reviews each proposal and generates any related questions. If there are questions, OCWWS convenes a conference with proposal author(s). Proposals will be considered for funding and included in draft IP. (By April 30)
- (4) The FRG jointly discusses and recommends the proposed allocation of training resources for the next fiscal year via the IP. (Early to mid May)
- (5) The IP is prioritized by the Office, Regional and NCEP Directors (May 15) and approved by the OCWWS Director (By July). IP posted on NWSTC web page. (by Aug. 1)
- (6) HOTG designs, develops and delivers training in accordance with the annual IP. (Ongoing)
- (7) Training assessment/evaluation occurs. Return to Step (1).

3. Annual Implementation Plan for Training and Education. As an end result of the NSTEP Process, the OCWWS Training Division prepares an annual Implementation Plan for Training and Education. This document specifies training and education activities for all NWS staff during the fiscal year. This plan is posted on the Web annually at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/os/org/training/mission.shtml>.